The
COMMONWEAL

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Prospect for the Displaced

THE gradual liquidation of UNRRA and the hitches met in setting up of the International Refugee Organization (happily the United States is not yet directly responsible for holding things up) highlight the unresolved status of the Displaced Persons. These exiles from totalitarianism who refuse to be repatriated where life and livelihood would be in extreme jeopardy are still confined to a number of camps in Austria and the non-Russian occupation zones in Germany. Estimates of their numbers vary but the figure is somewhere near three-quarters of a million. Perhaps half of them are Polish, one-quarter of the total Jews, and the rest various Baltic and Balkan peoples.

American occupation authorities appear alive to their responsibilities. They recently stopped political crossquestioning of Poles and Balts by UNRRA "teams" in order to prevent pressure from being applied to friends and relatives now living under Soviet authority. General McNarney is said to be at work on a message to the 400,000 DP's in the American zone, reassuring them that they will not be forcibly repatriated to Eastern Europe, while the Army is planning to take over during the lag between UNRRA and IRO.

At that point American initiative stops. In the last seven months of 1946 the United States admitted some 5,000 DP's to our shores, most of them under quotas. It is estimated in Washington that, because of quotas, overwhelmed consular staffs and lack of shipping, immigrants to this country must wait as long as ten years for entry. The contrast, for instance, between the annual quota of 6,524 Poles and the 400,000 Polish DP's urgently seeking a new country is a painful one. Terrible congestion is reported at American consulates in Rome, Warsaw, Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia. "The United States controls space on only six ships, and regulates it carefully."

The arguments in favor of American initiative in this vital matter are numerous. Because of the war and other disturbances some million potential immigrants failed to fill their country's modest quotas to the United States during the past ten years. Admittance of less than half that number—our share of the DP's according to competent observers—would therefore cause little hardship throughout the United States. Their unrelenting opposition to totalitarianism makes them politically desirable and has indubitably earned for them the sort of haven which well-endowed America affords. And if this country should take due action in assuming responsibility for our share of these homeless political victims, the beginnings already made by Argentina, Belgium, Brazil and the plan just announced by Great Britain to import a half million DP's for urban and rural labor would be rounded out.

Emissaries of several nations to the camps in Austria and Germany report that they have found the men and women there so capable of useful productive enterprise as to constitute welcome additions to their respective national economies. Yet one essential aspect of the problem must be squarely faced. Many who were once prisoners in nazi concentration camps are too broken physically to work very hard. Others are incapacitated by malnutrition and other privations of the long war years. While all must be exposed to the demoralization which month after month of the lethargy of a DP camp engenders. It is therefore not wise to claim too many virtues for the Displaced Persons as they are today—or to expect too much of them even after months of freedom. But our duty to provide a haven persists regardless of their physical or psychological condition. When the United States assumes a due share, the prospect for the minority remaining after Britain's action will be immeasurably brighter.

Toughest of all the obstacles in this vital matter, however, are current manifestations of American public sentiment. Representative Arthur Lewis Miller of Nebraska is at present gaining wide hearing for his unsupported and hysterical contention that somehow or other, and with government connivance, a million foreigners infil-

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trated into this country this past year. While Mr. Truman's mail reflects a 7 to 1 opposition to admitting Displaced Persons into the country. Are Americans to a man so short-sighted or is it just that the most egoistic and fearful of our citizens are now writing to the White House?

Get a Horse

"'SI, Señora Ramírez,' the stewardess was saying as we stepped aboard the Clipper. . . . *En que puedo servirles?* . . . And the answer of our Latin American fellow passengers was so rapid, so musical, so *different* from English that Tom and I felt we were already in Latin America before the Clipper took off."

An illustration above this Pan American Airlines baby-talk shows "Tom and I" (I is a girl). We are waiting for the stewardess to stop using those not English words so that we can approach two real foreigners and tell them that this is Tom's first real vacation, that is since we have been married because it is so *different* when you are married, and the idea of going to South America came to us when we read an advertisement about Bob and Helen who were opening the door of a frigidaire but, we said, you can't have everything at once, and if we had been able to buy a car, but the Clipper fares have been reduced four times since VJ day and one of the things about traveling is that you make friends on the trip. . . .

It would be different if American newspapers had only four pages like French newspapers, because then you would read about Tom's trip with his wife to Latin America—that advertisement must be a good one because they are putting it also in the *Saturday Evening Post* where it will be in color—and then you would buy a ticket to Rio, or you wouldn't, but the advertisement would have a fair chance to sell you the idea. But this advertisement appears in the New York *Times* which today has forty-eight pages and it is unfortunate for the advertiser that one full page out of this number is entirely devoted to airplane accidents—with pictures. The picture of "Tom and I" cannot compete with the Copenhagen picture, for instance, of the smoking ruins of the plane from which at the time the bodies of twenty-two passengers had, or had not been extracted. And what goes on in the minds of "Tom and I" does not make as persuasive reading as do the deliberations of all sorts of boards all over the the world busily seeking out the causes of airplane accidents. So that it is not possible to decide on Rio, even when part of the airline's service is to plant Latin American fellow passengers to whose music one can listen, without thinking that something might happen to interrupt the trip.

Statistics do not help. Mr. Harriman, Secretary of Commerce, tells us that the "safety record for 1946, despite all the spectacular crashes, was forty percent better than for 1945." "I fly all the time," he says, "and my family flies with my approval. Without flying, modern business, modern diplomacy cannot be carried on."

Without aviation, modern war cannot be carried on. (Without the atom bomb, modern war cannot be carried on.) Without flying them, you cannot rush diplomats rapidly from one point where they disagree to another where they continue to disagree. Without flying, you cannot get anywhere for any purpose as fast as you can if you fly. But also, without flying, it is impossible to fall down to the ground in an airplane.

It is useless certainly to take a horse and buggy attitude about flying but, for the present, we intend to have a little as possible to do with flying. This may be because we see too many pictures of wrecks or, as Mr. Harriman says demurely, because "certain aviation writing and advertising, particularly in the popular magazines, have oversold the public on the utility of flight in its postwar development."

America, the Unloved

A UNITED STATES Department of State domestic broadcast the other day treated at some length the long continued propaganda campaign conducted by those whom the spokesman termed "Leftists" against the United States. "Misrepresentations," suppressions of fact, and other circumlocutions for lies have been consistently and determinedly utilized against our government and people in a dishonest kind of "war" being fought by communists and fellow-travelers of the Russian State Party. It is a world-wide campaign, and the broadcast pointed first to eastern Europe and then to communist-controlled Yenan in China and even to France and such relatively free countries where Stalin's men vigorously operate.

It is a relatively clear and simple thing to have the country thus attacked by our great, peace-loving ally. People who are still surprised, or whose feelings are hurt either by the fact of Russian and communist antagonism or by the truth-defying methods used to implement that antagonism, truly ought not, at this late date, be worrying themselves with concern for politics and the way of the power world. But unhappily, there is considerable accumulating evidence that the United States (whatever that is: our people and government) is not too sympathetically loved by many people around the world who are not communists or fellow travelers (although, naturally, they are subject to the bolshevist propaganda). This non-CP dislike for our country is more involved and it also is more troubling to the feelings and conscience.

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The United States is spoken against as a sword-rattler and creator of future battlefields. When you think it over, there just doesn't seem much to be done about this, in itself. There is no way to deny the fact that the current world could not stage a first class universal war without American participation. It is not our policy to foster the illusion (it would be a lie for any country) that we will pay any price to avoid a war. Therefore, it would seem, any people abroad who think they would prefer to pay a greater price to avoid war than the US would, are almost bound to look on this country as a menace to their appeasing peace. But who considers us militarily aggressive, with designs for conquest? If there are any people who do, we ought certainly welcome the sharpest kind of questions and the most exhaustive inquiry and investigation by the UN. As for our defensive resolutions, we might try to clarify them more fully, and explain them repeatedly, and attempt to keep them from being unilateral. We should try to bring together in firm understanding as many countries as are in a position, physical and moral, to accept a responsible rôle in the unfolding of current history.

The US is pictured by unfriendly critics as "economic imperialist." To argue this out to the satisfaction of all concerned would be a brutally long job, leading into every by-way of abstract theory and private motive. Until we are all more calm and patient and rational, two recently published simple figures should furnish an overwhelming material rejoinder. In the year 1946, the United States imported from abroad—that is, took from the rest of the world—goods and services valued at $4,900,000,000; and the United States exported—that is, gave the other countries—goods and services valued at $9,800,000,000. That would be a strange sort of imperialism indeed, at a deficit of 2 to 1.

The US worries many people in the world who feel that this country is championing with stupid and shortsighted vigor an archaic laissez-faire economy of "free enterprise," tying the world up in it, and preparing us all for a new depression. A self-righteous defense here would be easy, but it would also be facile. Americans would deserve strong censure—if not to be put entirely astray as enemy of the common good—if we grew complacent and careless because of the geographic grandeur of the continent and the remarkable economic vigor and talent of our fathers and the countless lucky accidents which today make our economy relatively satisfying. We are indeed obligated to work harder for political, social and economic change than we yet show evidence of doing—not change for the sake of change, but progress because we know there is no standing still and because we know the pre-war system involved the depression, unemployment, injustice.

The State Department broadcast advocated as a remedy for the anti-Americanism being stirred up abroad the development of their Information Service to counteract misrepresentation and lies. As a remedy that appears inadequate. This year, America's story is a very, very subtle tale, which is not clear and strong enough to strike fire among the peoples of the world, with all of whom we want to be friends and by all of whom, loved. As simple Americans, we ourselves are certain that, really heard and understood and felt, the country's message right now, obscured and vague as it may be, is the best message that any country bears. Surely we should not try to pretend it contains a formula for solving all harassing problems, or a blueprint certain and exciting enough to stamp down wherever our ships and airships can go. But we must make much clearer the country's policy—its limitations, positively, just as its determination—and we must enlist the aid and summon a response from other people in helpful (feeding, sheltering, clothing) action or else all the State Department propaganda in the world will fail to keep men from turning away to adversaries. Americans feel over-righteously that we are not trying to stuff anything down anybody else's throat, but we are slow to recognize how terribly lax we are about making a politics and policy which, in the longer run, is genuinely adequate even for ourselves.

The Logic of Salvation from Youth

EITHER last week or this week was to be National Youth Week. Attorney General Tom C. Clark gave the big send-off. He wrote that the future of America and of the world is in the hands of youth. This, we take it, was not simply the statement of an actuarial fact which who indeed could deny. Not at all; many, many statements for the occasion showed that one is looking to "Youth" to lead the way to a better and finer society. (Attorney General Clark's particular tie-in is through juvenile delinquency, a growing problem which in its federal aspects—dope, the Mann Act, interstate car stealing, things like that—is under his charge.) Progressing, but only in the highest echelons, we find the President of Wellesley publically deploring the fact that college girls seem to be drinking an awful lot, even more than before, and that they have begun to object to people objecting to their drunkenness. The President of Vassar beautifully rounds out the circle of the youth-will-save thesis. She tells that youth is very gloomy these days, and, "If our young people are to help lead us out of the abyss [be it understood] there is no room for the negative outlook and it is up to the older generation to equip young people for leadership."

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Our North Frontier

An introduction to the three Alaskas

Walter J. Marx

THE NEW CONGRESS will have the opportunity of changing the flag of the United States by adding another star when it is called upon to admit the territory of Alaska as the forty-ninth state of the Union. Last year, for the first time in their history, Alaskans had the chance of expressing their own feelings about statehood. There had been a real difference of opinion among them. Over fifty different bureaus of the Federal Government ruled Alaska and poured out funds and personnel in the management of the territory. The Governor answered to the Secretary of the Interior and was appointed by the President of the United States. The territorial legislature had little real power. But some Alaskans felt that the scanty population of their land could not support the burden of a state government. Others, however, pointed to the millions of dollars pouring out of the territory every your to absentee owners and made clear that they intended to finance a state government and the development of Alaska by taxing those profits taken from Alaska's resources. An overwhelming majority of Alaska's citizens voted for statehood.

The territorial upper house, the Senate, had never really reflected the will of the people, because at least half its members had always been the stooges of the great mining and fishing industries which exploit Alaska's almost unlimited resources. It was natural that these business interests should oppose statehood, and although the election went against them, it is expected that they will use every effort to block action by Congress when Alaska comes up for admission to the Union as a new state.

In physical size Alaska will dwarf even mighty Texas. It is one-fifth as big as the whole United States, including Texas. The map of Alaska, placed over the map of the United States, reaches from Florida to California. But Alaska has only a fraction of the population of the least populous state, Nevada. The 1930 census gave Alaska 59,278 persons, including white inhabitants, Eskimos, Indians and Aleuts. After ten years of comparatively intensive development, this population had increased to 72,524. Of this number, 32,458 were of native stock. The Department of the Interior estimates that the population has increased since 1940 to between 80,000 and 90,000. Certain towns that played an important part in the war more than doubled in size. Anchorage, for example, became the most populous city in Alaska, with around 8,000 people.

Vast areas of Alaska are completely uninhabited. The Eskimo population, numbering around 15,000, is scattered in tiny villages over 200,000 square miles of land. Most of the white population is concentrated in the southern portions of Alaska. In the last century, even the Eskimos have largely abandoned the interior regions of the great Arctic plain.

I assume that by this time there is no longer any need for exposing the old fallacies about Alaska. The war made several thousand Americans learn about Alaska first hand, although one wonders just what idea of Alaska the citizen soldier must have who spent months of weary duty in the Aleutians and never even saw the mainland. The many soldiers stationed around Anchorage, however, must have learned much about the territory and its potentialities. The large contingent stationed on desolate Point Spencer, seventy miles from Nome and only about one hundred miles from Siberia, will, I am afraid, never think of settling in Alaska.

One of the reasons for so many divergent and contradictory views of Alaska is the immensity of its area (over 586,000 square miles) and the tremendous variation in climate caused by not only its size but by certain other conditions which accentuate differences in climate. For example, the Japanese current gives the southern coast of Alaska a climate much like that of Seattle, Washington, whereas the northern portion of the territory, cut off from this current by the Aleutian chain, is chilled by the waters of the Arctic Ocean flowing down into Bering Sea.

Legally Alaska is divided into four judicial divisions, each with its district court and officials, corresponding somewhat to the organization of an American county. The boundaries of these divisions are theoretical, however, and in general do not follow well-defined geographical lines. Rather than use these divisions, it is simpler to divide Alaska for the sake of discussion into three main divisions, not counting the Aleutian islands and the other islands off the coast. North of the Yukon River lies the major portion of Alaska, a

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vast frozen area with a very small white population. The only city in this area is Nome on Seward Peninsula with a population estimated by the Department of Interior to be about 1,500 in 1946. Mining is the main industry of this area, with fur trading a subsidiary activity. Reindeer production by the Eskimos, fishing and hunting are primarily subsistence occupations.

The next great division lies between the Gulf of Alaska and the Yukon River. Anchorage is its southern metropolis, and Fairbanks (population 5,000), on the Tanana, a tributary of the Yukon, its northern capital. Between these two cities, but nearer to Anchorage, lies the famous Matanuska Valley which in the midst of the depression saw Alaska's most ambitious agricultural settlement established. If Alaska is ever to have a large and prosperous population, it will be because of the development and growth of this great central area south of the Yukon but north of the appendage which contains the capital and juts far southward toward British Columbia. In fact, this is the only area which contains much land suitable for farming. It is estimated that in all Alaska there are approximately 65,000 square miles of tillable land which can be made available for agriculture. By 1930, barely 14 square miles had been cleared for cultivation.

A third natural division of Alaska is known as Southeastern Alaska, the narrow handle of the territory extending southward. It is about 380 by 120 miles in size and covers approximately 35,000 square miles of land and waterways. This area compares to that of New England less Maine. It is this region that is known best by the summer tourists of pre-war days who took excursions through the famous "inside passage" to Alaska. One passed dense evergreen forests, towering mountains, live glaciers periodically dropping thousands of tons of ice into the water, and picturesque hamlets clinging to small bits of land between the water and the mountains. Even the capital of the territory, Juneau, with an estimated population of 6,500, has such a location, appearing as if it could easily be pushed into the sea. Travel in this region of many islands and bays is primarily by water. The warm climate assures navigable waterways the year around. The mean temperature at Sitka for the coldest month, January, is 32.2 degrees Fahrenheit. At Chicago the mean temperature in January is 23.7, in New York City, 30.9.

This southeastern area is the most popular portion of Alaska, being the most accessible section of the territory. Its main industries are fishing, lumbering and mining. Agriculture is not possible to any great degree because of the mountainous nature of the country and the excessive rains. Alaskans hope for a large pulp industry in this region some day to exploit the rich timber resources available. It is also an ideal vacation area, and 73 percent of the area has been included in the National Forest system. Title to nearly all the land in the area is held by the Federal Government.

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Contrary to common opinion the main industry of Alaska is not mining but fishing, salmon fishing. Alaska produces more salmon than any other country in the world. In 1938 out of a total fish production of over fifty million dollars, salmon accounted for over forty-two million dollars. However, most of the fishing industry is in the hands of large absentee companies which import over half of their workers every season and whose greed has been such that there is real danger of their killing off the source of their wealth. In 1946 there was a further decline in the salmon production of Alaska, and even in my own youth twenty-five years ago in northern Alaska I saw the death of our local salmon industry because the methods of the big companies far to the south were so efficient and ruthless that the salmon could not travel on north. Not only were the small business men put out of the fishing business but also the Eskimos lost a most important portion of their own food and food for their dogs.

Although, in dollars, fishing is Alaska's most important industry, mining has played and continues to play a more decisive rôle in its development and in the determining of its special culture. In 1938 the product of Alaska's mines had an estimated value of twenty-seven million dollars. Of this total, gold accounted for eighty-one percent. Since 1880 Alaska has produced an estimated 776,000,000 dollars in minerals. It should be pointed out, however, that most of the mining has been of the placer variety and is consequently about as seasonal as fishing. The mines open in the spring, the miners pour into the territory and then leave with their gold in the fall. Those Alaskans working in the mines must then find something else to do for the long eight or nine months of winter. It is no wonder that wages in the summer are high — one must often live on them all winter.

In 1938 the export of raw furs from Alaska amounted to three million dollars, and this industry, with its trappers and fur farms, offers employment and revenue to an important segment of the population. The Eskimos in particular would find it difficult to buy the staple foods of the white man, sugar and flour and coffee, without the cash income derived from the fox skins traded off at the nearest general store.

Before the war, Alaska's newest industry, agriculture, supported approximately a thousand persons in the Matanuska Valley. In the Tanana Valley in the Fairbanks district there were about

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200 people engaged in farming and dairying. In this cold region, grain and potatoes are the main crops. Blizzards in this portion of Alaska are less frequent than in Wyoming and Montana so that cattle have no more trouble surviving the cold weather than in these states.

There are excellent tin deposits, vast quantities of copper, platinum and coal and smaller quantities of silver, lead and other minerals. From 1900 to 1936 almost a quarter of a billion dollars worth of copper was exported from the territory. Since the discovery of tin in Alaska some thirty-five or forty years ago, a million and a quarter dollars' worth has been exported. However, before the war it was necessary to ship the tin ore of Alaska across the Pacific to Singapore for smelting.

In addition to the above industries, there are of course the service industries. My mother and another lady operate a trading post at Teller, Alaska, and trade with the local Eskimos, those from farther north, from King Island and the Diomede Islands and even with the Siberian Eskimos who paddle across to Teller every season, although they have pitifully little to trade since the Russian Government has a monopoly upon their fur production. Nome is full of stores of all sorts, remarkably well stocked for so small a town. In the southern and southeastern portions of Alaska there is the embryo tourist industry. Indeed, this portion of Alaska is a literal paradise for the more rugged type of tourist and hunter.

Alaska compares most favorably with Finland, Sweden and Norway. These countries support a comparatively large population on a remarkably high standard of living, but Alaska far surpasses them in natural resources and in the potentialities of future development. It is estimated that Alaska could support easily as many as ten million or more people. Yet it will be recalled that when Mr. Ickes once suggested opening Alaska to a hundred thousand refugees he was howled down not only by Americans in general but in particular by the Alaskans themselves. One hundred thousand refugees would have completely engulfed the some thirty-five thousand white inhabitants of the territory and would have changed entirely Alaska's rather fine and unique culture, a blending of the higher virtues of the frontier with many of the amenities of what we call civilization.

From the point of view of future settlement there are certain grave problems which must be overcome before Alaska will become a haven for the homeless peoples of the world. She is only potentially a future Sweden or a Finland. Place within a few miles of Alaska's southern boundary a population as concentrated as that of northern Europe, build in Alaska the same proportion of highways and railroads as in Sweden, then undoubtedly Alaska would develop with amazing rapidity. Note that Sweden has 7,000 miles of railroads. Alaska, three times as big as Sweden, has 509 miles. A nine day boat trip on the ocean is required to go from Seattle to Nome. Even though water transport is comparatively inexpensive, this long haul makes heavy and bulky items cost much more in Alaska than in the States. Although there is much variation, it can be said that the cost of foodstuffs in Alaska is at least 25 percent higher than in the United States. There is only a single railroad in Alaska, running from Seward on the southern coast to Fairbanks.

At Teller, Alaska, seventy miles below the Arctic Circle, my mother writes me that last month butter was $1.10 a pound (no worse than in many stores here!), flour advanced from its war time price of $7.30 a hundred pounds to $8.00 and $8.50; canned milk advanced from $6.75 a case to $7.50; sugar remained steady at $10.50 a hundred pounds. Coal at Teller is $39.00 a ton. Twenty-five years ago it was $42.00 a ton. Yet within a few hundred miles of Teller, if my memory does not fail me, perhaps as little as two hundred miles to the north, there is a natural coal mine with an inclined plane from the mouth of the mine to the edge of the Arctic Ocean so that small cars can run down to the water's edge and dump their cargo into a ship lying alongside. The catch is that there is no harbor and the rough water makes it almost impossible for a ship to stay in this berth. So we import our coal from the United States.

The more one reflects upon the problem of Alaskan development the more one realizes that this matter of transportation is the crux of the matter. Of course there are other problems too: absentee ownership and exploitation of Alaska's almost incalculable wealth, the great mosquito curse which I scarcely dare mention, the unbalanced employment resulting from only summer work in Alaska's key industries, the lack of capital and the large amount of capital required for the opening of each new enterprise. But all of these, with the possible exception of the mosquitoes further north, can be solved in time if only a viable solution can be found to the problem of transportation, and its allied problem, cheap fuel and resultant power.

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In preparing to write on Alaska, I went through the files of my old newspaper, published years ago when I was still a boy at Teller, I called at the office of the Alaskan Delegate to Congress and at the Department of the Interior which is particularly charged with the supervision of Alaska. In order to refresh my memory still further I went to see a documentary film on Alaska. I saw again the most magnificent scenery on the

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North American continent. I saw magnificent farms, cotton and tobacco growing, vegetables that would take prizes at county fairs in the United States, miniature cities clinging to lofty mountains on the edge of the sea, all in all a glorious country to stir men's blood, to make one want to seize axe and rifle and go forth to build a home for the future. The land is free. But the movie closed on a discouraging note: a brief mention was made that of some eleven thousand persons born in Alaska, seven thousand preferred to live somewhere else. The commentator wondered why. The would-be emigrant to Alaska would do well to think about this important fact. For example, why have I, a native son, mortgaged my future to buy a hundred and twelve acres of the old state of Maryland when I could get a hundred and sixty acres of virgin forest and rich new soil in Alaska for nothing, simply by living on the land and working on it for only seven months? (My time in the army counts toward acquisition of a homestead in Alaska and one is allowed five months off each year of residence.)

As a small boy in Nome I recall throwing rocks at General Jimmy Doolittle who grew up to become a national hero. But how many people know that he is an Alaskan? Why did he leave his native land? Why have so many others left, most of them young people whose families were already established in Alaska? Most of these emigrés have become so completely absorbed into American life that their Alaskan origin seems completely forgotten.

Some of the answers to the problem of emigration from the territory and for the failure of the territory to attract more settlers will be discussed in later articles, the next one considering the northern portion of the territory, and its metropolis, Nome.

Contrast in Capitals

ANNE FREMANTLE

IT WAS ARMS and the man that Virgil said he sang. But both the real subject of the "Aeneid," and its object, was the city of Rome. For to fallen man, the city (*that* city of course, above all, but also any city!) has always been his one earthly safety, his true refuge, and has furthermore also served to signify the security he can never find here but hopes for hereafter. Two loves, "as Austin saith," have created two cities, and man must willy nilly direct himself *nella citta dolente* or towards the blazing emeralds of the celestial city's streets. To flee *to* the cities is the first, as to flee *from* them is the last, act of man's despair.

Our civilization that is part Greek, part Jewish, and wholly Mediterranean, is expressed only in cities; the very word is rooted in their meaning and context. And a capital city must, of course, be not only something more, but something other, than a city. For one of the most immediately obvious things about a city is that it is the opposite of the country; but a capital city must be also the country, not physically, of course—that suggests the ultimate horror of the ribbon development or the garden suburb—but spiritually. It must babble of green fields, and must represent, not only to the visitors and the foreigner, but also to the native, all his land. Thus London must contain primrose-crowded Sussex and the empty Yorkshire moors, the bracken-colored Monmouthshire hills and the flats of Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. Whilst Washington is the capital not only of New England, whose low-wooded slopes are furred in fall with strange fires of sumac and hickory, maple and dogwood, but also of the Louisianian bayous, muffled in Spanish moss; of the painted Arizona desert as of the thousand-mile range of the implacable Rockies. And yet, what nonsense that is. For London is itself; Washington is Washington; they are nothing and nobody else. Indeed, you might as easily define a woman by her granddaughters, a husband by his aunts, as Paris by Périgord or Berlin by Bavaria.

And as countries are the sum of the smell of their air, the taste of their fruits, the way their hedgerows are planted, and their roads march or curl, so cities are the steepness or flatness of their streets, the size and spacing of their windows, the shape of their principal squares or places, the character of their statues and principal monuments. The vulgarity of the Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens, the pomposity of Unter den Linden reflect, the one the whole nineteenth century, the other all the Kaiser meant to Germany, or Germany to the Kaiser. And the more one knows and loves any city, the more entirely and distinctly it is seen to be different from any other. It is not rude, but it is only ignorant, to comment on the similarity of Verona and Vicenza, or to call Stockholm the Venice, or Edinburgh the Athens, of the North. For it denotes a lack of intimacy, a using of the wrong nickname, calling William, Bill, when his friends use Willy.

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In a very special sense, this is true of London and Washington and of their contrasts—as it is, of course, true of anything and everything British and American. For everything generally postulated about other countries, cities or civilizations, by way of comparison, is exaggeratedly true of these two, so sadly divided by the similarity of their language. An earlier identity of origin, creeds and customs has resulted in the most disparate of national characteristics, and what needs

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stressing now is not what is similar, but what is separate. As Saint John Chrysostom remarked, no one can be better able to distinguish differences than those who have entered into the unity—the unity in this case being the sharing in the original Anglo-Saxon culture which produced both cities.

How entirely different they are! For example, consider Chelsea and Georgetown. Superficially, there are quite a few resemblances. Both are fashionable suburbs largely occupied by a middle-class intelligentsia inhabiting, in the one case, houses outbought from the Negro, and in the other, from the native poor. In Chelsea, each solitary genuine artist or writer is surrounded by at least a dozen pseudos or fakes, like a bottle of Scotch in a liquor-store window. In Georgetown, during World War II, for each real admiral, general or full colonel, there was a whole covey of desk-type facsimiles. Both Chelsea and Georgetown are famous for their historic gardens, lovely in spring with magnolias, their creamy petals like lemon-scented kid-gloves. In both the houses are on show, on certain days for certain causes, and the price of house-property never bears any relation to real values: people will pay for a frame shack in Georgetown, a slum flat in Chelsea, far more than for a nice villa in Clapham or a sweet home in Chevy Chase.

Chelsea is smutty and gray: the famous vistas are of the steely river edged with power station or factory stacks, or gas tanks across ironclad water. The charm is melancholy as Sir Thomas More's mulberry tree: foreigners appreciate it most: the French Monet, the American Whistler, the Chinese Traveller have done it most proud. Whereas Georgetown is as gay as a printed gingham gown, warm, Southern, a glory of pink dogwood and double cherry, a froth of pear-blossom, through which polished ebony faces peer like pancake ads.

★

The majesty of London is serious, solid, opulent. It is above all, more than any other capital city, the city of merchants, the chief town of a nation of shopkeepers, of the greatest trading nation in the world, the capital of the country which is mistress of the seven seas. The "City" itself is wholly given over to pure commerce, and her burghers were free merchants before Agincourt. Whereas Washington, contrariwise, of all American towns revolves least round her small "down-town" section; the center of her life is embassy-flanked Massachusetts Avenue, or the gothic wedding cake State Department. London is so immensely sure of herself that only her scale and splendor prevent her being ostentatious: she is so proud that she is never vain. Washington, on the other hand, is very much of a lady, and the White House is no palace, but the town residence of the First Gentleman of the world.

London, too, is full of ghosts. No other town, except perhaps beleaguered Prague, is so haunted. And there are pockets of evil no traffic can make banal, of which the Tower, Tyburn, and the tragic, still unbuilt-on plague pit, the little triangle of grass outside Tattersall's in Knightsbridge, are examples. Tiny unobtrusive ghosts crowd everywhere and can hardly be persuaded to keep in their places. The nurses walking in the Park know them, and use them to scare or to quiet their charges; the goat that used to be tethered in the Green Park, just below the Ritz; the Iron Duke of Wellington, who sits still at the top of Apsley House at Hyde Park Corner, in the iron chair he had made so he could look down on the crowds who first cheered and then hated him when Waterloo had become history, and it was the day of Peterloo. Through a French window in Kensington Palace the seventeen-year-old Victoria walks out onto the lawn as Queen: whilst Harriet Shelley floats in the Serpentine, Percy sails boats on the Round Pond.

And the haunted houses are known too, to all, and people laugh when they *are* let or sold, knowing new notices will appear soon again, "desirable freehold, to be let, to be sold." On the corner of Ovington Square is one, and another in Mill Place; there are dozens. Whereas Washington is thinly populated with ghosts.

And that brings up the question, do its history and ghosts make up the sum of a city's soul, or do its people? Is it environment or heredity that contributes most to the substance of a city's quality? It is not easy to decide. Without the memory of Helen's face or the shadow of Creusa, how empty is Troy! And yet, Washington owes nothing but their names to the heroes whose memorials are her glory: Lincoln, Jefferson are excuses for architecture, not presiding spirits. And were all record since the wolf suckled the twins destroyed, She of the Seven Hills would move men still, as Lisbon, or Budapest, by sheer beauty of setting. Yet to the GI's storming the steep sides of the Sicilian hills, Enna was a confounded nuisance, something to get around without being sniped by German machine-gunners inside; if they were pilgrims to Persephone, it was unwillingly and unwittingly.

Every self-respecting city is built on or near a river, and London and Washington could not differ more as to the quality or quantity of their water. The Thames is the most variable of all rivers. It is so different at Runnymede from what it is at Kew that, perhaps three miles away, it is hard to believe it is the same river. Even it is quite other at Westminster than at Chelsea, or at Bermondsey again from Greenwich. But the

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Potomac is all-of-a-piece, treacherous, wily stream, that drowns people every year, and even in midsummer is full of currents and eddies; always it is fascinating but always unreliable. And the difference in rivers is no more pronounced than the difference in drinking water. London has perhaps the best in the world, from its own artesian supply; Washington the nastiest, as chlorinated as a school swimming pool.

Neither city is gastronomically asterisked, yet both have some admirable eating places. In Washington, down by the river, at the little bar where the fishing boats come in, are the muddiest oysters in the world that can be eaten fresh with a pocket-knife, standing on the quay. A row of little restaurants on balconies overlooks the scene; on the hottest day they are cool; their seafruit is memorable. There is a Greek restaurant, called for Agamemnon's prophetic mistress, where the best stuffed peppers and the best yoghourt are certain; there is a Chinese place where, if you order ahead, you can be sure of faring as well as anywhere east of San Francisco. And in London there are, of course, fancy French places where, even in the worst days of the war, even in the far, far leaner todays, one eats well, however sparingly. But the best London food is English. Simpson's, of course, but better the Café Royal, beloved café, whose coffee comes in tall glasses, and where there is the best spinach in the world. But above all Rules, the small place where theater folk eat after the show, that has photographs of Garrick and Kean and Fanny Kemble jostling John Gielgud in happy incongruity.

It would be hard to say in which city walking is pleasanter, for in both the use of one's almost archaic legs is a delight, not a duty. To go from the fountains at the end of Kensington Gardens across the Serpentine bridge, along Rotten Row, past the barracks up to Hyde Park Corner on a foggy November morning, when the brief views are every tone of blue and gray, colored to match the pigeons flocked upon Nelson's lions in Trafalgar Square; or, in June to see the Foreign Office dazzling as any pleasure dome from across the St. James Park pelican lake, is as pleasant as it is to scramble up and down and in and out of Rock Creek Park cross-countrying between Connecticut Avenue and Q Street when the fall-shrill trees bay the unfinished Cathedral, webbed in its scaffolding. To walk along the Tidal Basin in April is what one remembers always as one remembers Richmond Park on a June morning with the deer wandering about, and the architecturally massive oaks and beeches.

But, excellent cities though both of these be, Washington and London both are but the capitals of countries. Great countries of course, and great cities. But New York, that is to be the world-capital, is even more of a city than either. It is essence of city, absolutely and uncompromisingly urban. And because, as Aristotle and Saint Thomas agree, that thing is best which is most itself, New York is the greatest of all cities.

A Letter to America

America, when you were born, and when the plains
Spelled out their miles of praises in the sun
What glory and what history
The rivers seemed to prepare.

We hear them, now, in the Kentucky summer,
While all the locusts drown our forests in their iron prayer:
And we dream of you, beloved, sleeping in your leafy bosom.

How long are we to wake
With eyes that turn to wells of blood
Seeing the hell that gets you from us
With his treacherous embrace!

The bands that raced our flesh
With smiles as raw as scars,
Can kill you, Kansas, with their high-powered thirst.
Have you not heard the vast Missouri sing
To drown them with those billion gallon silences?

But when the day is quieter
Then your primeval cradle
All our green woods fill, once again, with wishful lies:
Maybe the cities (sing the birds, our travellers)
Maybe the cities have begun to heal,
And stanched their smoky hemorrhage:
Maybe they have begun to mend their cauteries,
Parsing the muteness of so many dead.

Down where the movies grit
Their white electric teeth,
Maybe the glorious children have rebelled
And rinsed their mental slums
In the clean drench of an incalculable grief.

Maybe their penitence has torn the phony sunset
To view their devil dressed in laudanum,
And scotched his crazy spectre,
And learned the liberty of the unfathomable stars,
Within the doors of their confessionals,
Their new, more lasting Lexingtons!

But oh, the flowering cancers of that love
That eats your earth with roots of steel!
No few fast hours can drain your flesh
Of all those seas of candied poison,

Until our long Gregorian cry
Bows down the stars' Samaritan
To rue the pity of so cruel a murder.

THOMAS MERTON.

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Communications

GERMAN MENTALITY

Sunnyside, Wash.

TO the Editors: We hear a great deal of the mistakes that are being made by occupation authorities, and many a kind-hearted person on our side of the ocean has been wondering whether the Potsdam agreement was not a fundamental mistake after all. We also hear very often that the Germans are isolated and are being educated for democracy by being held in tutelage.

Many newspaper clippings and clandestinely mailed pages from German newspapers, together with private letters, seem, however, to indicate that while there may be reason to think of better methods, the one-sided presentation we hear of is, to say the least, exaggerated. May I quote from a clipping of *Die Welt,* Hamburg (date missing, but headed: License 21 of military government), which appeared as an editorial in that paper around Christmas.

"All the victor nations came to Germany with the firm will to get rich and full [sic!]. The famous 'get rich' of the French bourgeois king (Louis Philippe) was pronouncedly, or in the bottoms of their hearts, the only purpose with which they entered Germany. And they certainly lived up to this policy in their requisitions, reparations and 'demontage' policy. Now, a year and a half after, it is no more the idea of what you can get out of Germany that fills the greedy imagination [sic] of the victors, but the idea of what you have to pump into it. Faster than ever, history has destroyed the dream of all victors that the victor is the richer when the conquered get poor. It took them 6 years after 1918 . . . one and a half now . . . [This action] is not prompted by pure humaneness, but calculated selfishness. At this time, however, it is the fact, not the motives, which counts. Had the victors not given themselves so much to the intoxications of victory and revenge [sic] . . . they would not now have to make such sacrifices to save us. Their policy of reparations knew no limit: dismounting everything: shipyards and fishing trawlers, ball-bearing and cement factories. They artificially limited our capacity to produce and ruined the base of our existence . . . a full meal became a rare case of luck. . . . It taught the victors a lesson . . . they recognized that no victory or defeat can destroy the community of victor and vanquished. This is knowledge of a primitive kind. In these years of inverted and perverted periods of history it has not always been admitted."

I am not sure my translation is all it ought to be. But one may draw a few conclusions from it. First: the military government's censors permit more self-expression and criticism, bordering on arrogance, than we usually expect from censors. Secondly: such a gross misrepresentation as the accusation that the Allies came to Germany like a swarm of locusts shows that not even the leaders have as yet understood what a true change of mind means. I consider this a flagrant proof of a continued nazi mentality and a sad confirmation of so many reporters' claims that nazism lives on. I also see a threat between the lines which makes me doubt whether another procedure, different from that of Potsdam, would have changed Germany or not. The imputation of base motives (greed) and the refusal to understand the very word "reparation" show that there is a vocal group of Germans, tolerated by Allied authorities, that has had no change of heart. If it weren't for the fact that this article only says openly what dozens of private letters of supposedly anti-nazis say privately, I would regard this as the insignificant rumble of an empty stomach. But I am afraid it is more than that, and I wonder whether or not filled stomachs and humming plants will change the tune! May I repeat my old question: where are the guardians of the German conscience?

H.A. REINHOLD.

"POWER AND EVENTS"

St. Louis, Mo.

TO the Editors: Perhaps I shall be dismissed at once as one of those "specialists in advanced philosophy" for whom alone A. P. Ushenko's "Power and Events" is considered to be intelligible by THE COMMONWEAL reviewer, Walter J. Marx (January 10). Although Dr. Marx admits that hard study of this book will show it generally to make good sense and to be in the best modern philosophical traditions, yet he goes on to classify Ushenko with the treasonable intellectuals who refuse to apply their minds in a readily intelligible way to the most vital problems of the day. In addition, it is charged that the title of the book is a deception and that the jacket would lead one to expect an essay in twentieth-century social dynamics.

My own approach to the book was in expectation of some treatment of the wider problem of potency and act and whatever the publisher's get-up, the title was not deceptive from this viewpoint. It does not require specialized philosophical training to take the hint provided by the word "events," which readers have come to associate with Whitehead's philosophy and with a certain field of speculative analysis. Moreover, from Nietzsche and Peirce to Bertrand Russell, modern philosophers have been dealing with the concept of power not only in its immediate and obvious social bearing but also in a more formal way. There might almost be said to be a revival of the old treatise *"De Potentia et Actu"* in this line of speculation which Ushenko is continuing in the present volume.

Admittedly, Ushenko is a difficult, sprawly, and at times unnecessarily obscure writer. But another factor must be allowed to have affected his approach: the use of logical analysis in the manner of, though not in doctrinal harmony with, the Cambridge school and logical positivism. This is apparent from the author's earlier writings. On this last score, I cannot see how a thinker can be rebuked for using a special method of investigation, unless the critic offers philosophical reasons for disqualifying that method.

Dr. Marx has not done this, except to declare that much of the book is unintelligible to the layman and is directed to non-vital ends. The latter charge probably

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carries more weight, for it will be admitted that in *theoretical* discussions we must be willing to undergo the technical preparations necessary to grasp a set of terms and a way of attacking the issues. For many a non-Scholastic philosopher, for instance, the Scholastic method and doctrine remain a hopeless jumble because of an unwillingness to submit to this minimal preparatory discipline.

Where I would sharply challenge Dr. Marx's judgment, however, is on the question of the general worthwhileness of Ushenko's *kind* of study. Our times are suffering from the attitude that pure philosophy is only to be tolerated among the specialists, whereas any thinker with a conscience should direct his reason formally and primarily to "the vital problems of our times." The social and political philosophy of Saint Thomas or Maritain grew out of a searching and uncompromisingly disinterested prior investigation of speculative issues for their own sake. No really practical philosophy can be developed apart from such speculative foundations, such independent consideration of power, act, change, causality, truth, judgment and value. These are also the main themes of Ushenko's book. They are what he set out to study, and they are worth examining at great length for their own sake without any immediate reference to their twentieth-century relevance. If his results prove to be sound in the speculative order, then they may well have beneficial consequences when applied to practical conditions. But no man should be taken to task for not doing what he did not pretend to undertake, or for not undertaking a task which would presuppose a foundation which he has not yet provided for himself.

As for Benda and his misleading *"trahison des clercs,"* it is about time that we began to take seriously the counter-warning of Charles S. Peirce: "Not in the contemplation of 'topics of vital importance' but in those universal things with which philosophy deals, the factors of the universe, is man to find his highest occupation."

JAMES COLLINS.

HUMANISM AND THE MACHINE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Every reader interested in the problem of Machinery *vs.* Men must be grateful to you for publishing C. Marion Mitchell's appreciative study of Signora Ferrero's contribution to the literature of anti-machinism. But it is hardly accurate to claim that "her words . . . became those of a voice crying in the wilderness." For more than a century, at least, courageous thinkers and critics have uttered warnings of the disastrous and devastating impact of the machine-process upon traditional skills and upon human culture as a whole. In the selected bibliography published in his book "Mechanization and Culture" (Herder, 1941), Dr. Walter John Marx, of the Catholic University of America, indicates the extent and variety of this literature, though it was manifestly impossible for him to publish any exhaustvie bibliography.

An honest and courageous critic of contemporary society Signora Ferrero cannot justly be acclaimed as par-

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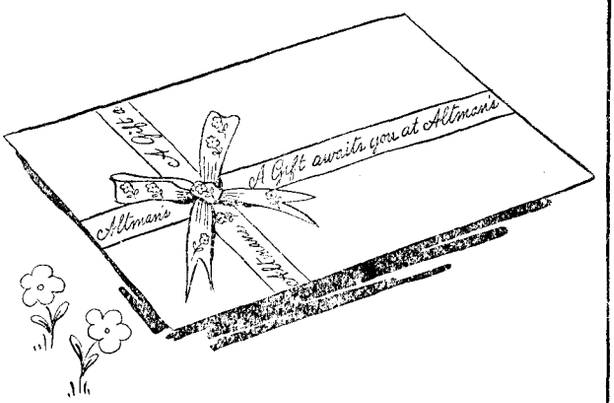

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ticularly original or daring. One of the true pioneers in this field of thought was the eccentric Samuel Butler, whose "Book of the Machines" in "Erewhon" foresaw with uncanny accuracy the disasters humanity was preparing for its future. It is fallacious, likewise, to dismiss John Ruskin as a mere medievalist. A re-reading of his "Fors Clavigera" is required for anyone who wishes to pursue this study to its roots.

Machinery is intricately correlated with the whole problems of industrialism, urbanism, and modern warfare as symbolized by the Bomb. Before man can hope for a solution, he must submit to an unsparing diagnosis of his condition. Two recent books contribute much, though neither is at present available in an American edition. One of these is "Le Règne de la Quantité" by that most provocative analyst of this modern age—René Guénon. This book has recently been published in Paris by Gallimard. The second is "Where Man Belongs" by H. J. Massingham (Collins, London). Mr. Massingham correlates the rise of machinery with the rise of great, uniform metropoli, and the concurrent disintegration of the arts of husbandry. In a word mass production has resulted in the production of masses.

Give your readers more essays on this most important problem. Until it is solved, mankind will be dealing with symptoms, not basic causes. No, let us not delude ourselves with simple wholesale nostrums!

ROBERT ALLERTON PARKER.

CONSCRIPTION

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The new Congress will soon consider the extension of Selective Service or the introduction of legislation for permanent peacetime conscription. This will be an integral part of a consistent pattern of competitive power developing throughout the world, including the maintenance of huge military machines, the development of atomic and biological weapons, the scramble for colonies and raw materials. It will lead by its own logic to another war and to the end of civilization.

This pattern must not be allowed to develop further. We who recognize the drift toward World War III have the responsibility to take action individually and collectively to try to stop it. We have it within our power to attack one major aspect of this problem—conscription.

Therefore we the undersigned propose to break with conscription now. In February we shall get rid of our draft credentials publicly, returning them to the President, accompanied by a letter of explanation, or by disposing of them in open demonstrations. We hope to see demonstrations organized in our local communities to dramatize the importance of the event. Those of us who have no draft cards, but who wish to take part in the project, will write a letter to the President, expressing solidarity and agreement with this action. We understand fully that this is serious, that we are undertaking a program of civil disobedience. But when our country is competing with the rest of the world in the manufacture of weapons of absolute destruction, then as Thoreau put it, "It is not too soon for an honest man to rebel."

Those who also feel ready to break with conscription and say sincerely and emphatically that the present trend toward war must cease are asked to send their names and addresses to George Houser, 2929 Broadway, New York 25, N. Y.

(Signed)

Rev. Donald Harrington, minister Community Church, New York City.
Robert C. Ludlow, Association of Catholic Conscientious Objectors, New York City.
Dwight Macdonald, editor *Politics,* New York City.
Professor Milton Mayer, University of Chicago.
Rev. A. J. Muste, Fellowship of Reconciliation, New York City.
Dr. Scott Nearing, economist, writer, Jamaica, Vt.
Frank Olmstead, War Resisters League, Washington, D. C.
Edward C. M. Richards, former Chief Forester TVA, West Chester, Pa.
Professor Paul Schilpp, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.

THE COMMONWEAL *is convinced that pacifism is respectable—or as respectable as this magazine wants to be—and that the advocates of pacifism deserve a greater and easier hearing than they receive. The Sermon on the Mount is addressed to every person. Few people so far attend much to it, but it is re-assuring that there always seem some who re-act to it—or to some echo of it—with the radicalism of the signers of this letter. But there are other texts. . . . We do not take responsibility for assuming that the World, or many people in it—not a determining number—will govern themselves by pacifist principles. We do not agree that an American military machine must lead by its own logic to the likelihood of a war that will end civilization, nor to the scramble for colonies and raw materials. Pacifism we conceive to be a personal choice, and when a pure choice, one which we could not possibly argue against, but which we admire and pray for.*—THE EDITORS.

The Stage & Screen

"If In The Greenwood . . ."

AS THE OLDEST and, at present, the only working experimental theater in town, The Blackfriars deserves not only the interest, but certainly the steadfast support of this column. However, in respect of their present production, and in honesty, I feel I can only confess to base prejudice and admit that Victoria Kuhn's drama was beyond both my understanding and my *standing,* and that I fled before its close. Miss Kuhn's work deals with the problem of an arrogant but great diplomat of a nameless small country "some year ahead of the present moment," who must choose between his own pride and accepting the responsibility of fighting within the UN for his country's welfare and that of the other "little people." Marital difficulties (two different sets of them)

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complicate the scheme, but what seemed especially incredible to me was the language in which the author spoke her piece. Wishing no doubt to abstract syntactically, and also to poeticize her idiom, so that the result could be fitted to any or every foreign country, I can only say Miss Kuhn arrived at something which might be called a translation from Esperanto. It was recognizable as English certainly—the words were English ones; but their engineering was so amazing, one could only wonder rather than listen. And as at unheralded moments the business took on the rhythm and sing of poetry, I must concede I was lost. Perhaps it was all really in the subjunctive mood, which is the one I never got to study, and so have never indulged. I thought an actress called Ann Linsley displayed a warm, generous quality in the midst of other astonishments and, as always, the physical production managed by Avril Gentles was exceptionally schemed for the small difficult stage. For the rest, I can only add my apologies. (*At the Blackfriars' Guild.*)

Sweethearts

IN the pedestrian, and certainly rather selfish, discussion of the musical scene ('Street Scene") contained here last week, when I pleaded for some definition of the numerous tangle conventions employed, it will have been apparent that I didn't know how soon I was to be paid back. One week away, and here is this revival of a Victor Herbert, which is pure way-back Operetta, with every trick clicking automatically into place, and the whole adding up to that disease called Simple Nostalgia. In one way, of course, the disease is a pleasant one, but in this case, I'm afraid it's not accomplished (caught) with much style. Everything looks somewhat shoddy, and listens somewhat slow. On the other hand, it is certainly impossible to be cut-and-dried and dull about the proceedings with Bobby Clark hurling through them at his customary pace, first as a double-breasted Hussar (with bells); later as a laundress, always as himself. WITH the cigar, the glasses, the cane. For those who think he's funny (and I'm one), this will be an evening; the rest had better shoot for "Street Scene" immediately and enjoy some difficulties, plus real arguable *stuff*. (*At the Shubert.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Everyman's Choice

WHAT this week's reviews lack in timeliness (mainly owing to the fact that I was out of town for ten days and was late in getting caught up on previews) they make up for in variety of subjects. The short paragraphs below cover none of these current pictures completely but may help you decide which of the films you should make extra effort to see—or avoid.

"Man's Hope" is the film that André Malraux made, from his own novel, in Barcelona in 1938. Since it is not a "passionate indictment of Franco" (as the advertisements say) and since it avoids the political arguments of the Spanish Civil War, one wonders why both Spanish and French censors banned it. In any case it is finally being released in this country and it is definitely worth seeing.

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Although it relates two incidents from the Loyalist side of this conflict, it could very well be a tribute to any fighters—any fighters who believed thoroughly in their cause and fought with utter determination in spite of the fact that they were limited in ammunition and resources. While there is a certain confusion and the script and the editing lack continuity, the film has a stirring quality that puts many a better planned picture in the shade. Malraux himself directed "Man's Hope" which has scene after scene of documentary-like realism. There are many shots of Spanish peasants, of guerrilla fighters, of fliers in the International Brigade—all portrayed with a sincerity that could only be caught on the actual locale. Even more impressive than the eloquent photography of people and places (beautifully accompanied by the music of Darius Milhaud) is the long finale in which Spaniards, after a plane crash, move the bodies of the wounded and dead down the mountainside. Continuing for more than ten minutes, this scene acquires force through its simplicity and solemnity, and carries an impact that is emotionally disturbing. Perhaps it is this very quality in this moving film which alarmed the fascists in Spain and France.

Another foreign picture that pays a tribute to man's indomitable will to survive is *"The Overlanders."* Made in Australia by its British director and scriptwriter Harry Watt, this film could be called a "western" except for the fact that it is so unconventional and that it has no villain—unless we consider the unseen Japs and the natural elements as such. During the war, the people of Northern Australia were determined that if the enemy invaded they would get nothing from this district. So there took place the largest mass migration of cattle the world has ever seen. In thrilling cinema, "The Overlanders" depicts the first of these treks, made in 1942 when 968 head of cattle were driven a distance as far as from London to Moscow. The drovers, consisting of a few experienced hands, including two Aborigines, and several inexperienced helpers including a sailor, a child and two women, were led by a tall, lean cowboy (played by Chips Rafferty, a sort of young Gary Cooper without the coyness). The journey was full of danger and excitement induced by such barriers as a river infested with crocodiles, a poison weed that killed off many of the horses, a desert without water or feed, the waterhole that turned out to be a bog, etc., etc. Much of the film's appeal is due to its unrehearsed naïve quality, which at times, however, is a bit overdone. The photography and scenery are exceptionally interesting and the whole is charged with reality. You'll probably be exhausted at the trip's end and you'll decide that cattle are the dumbest animals alive.

Hollywood's offerings seem rather trivial after these imports—especially such a superficial item as *"The Perfect Marriage,"* which is guilty of one of the American industry's major faults: using slickness to cover emptiness. It has a bright and handsome cast (including Loretta Young, David Niven, Zasu Pitts, Charles Ruggles and several others of starry calibre), some stunning costumes worn by its pretty actresses and some very swank sets that even Park Avenue wouldn't scorn. But it has almost no mental content. Based on Samson Raphaelson's not-too-successful stage play, it tells about a "perfectly married" couple who celebrate their tenth anniversary by quarreling over practically nothing at all; they start divorce proceedings and then make up over practically nothing at all. Miss Young, Mr. Niven *et al* are attractive to look at and amusing at times when they have something to say, which is, alas, in this film too seldom.

If you really want something escapist *"Sinbad the Sailor"* is your dish. With lovely sets in exceptionally good technicolor, with a fine cast and a fast moving story of adventure and romance, this extravaganza tells about Sinbad's eighth voyage. Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., bouncing all over the place as his famous father once did, vies with Walter Slezak and Anthony Quinn in this fable about the lust of three men for gold and power. Maureen O'Hara, looking more beautiful than ever in colorful Oriental costumes competes too—but she turns out to be one of the prizes along with the treasure which is finally found. This cinematic Arabian Nights directed with imagination and effective pace by Richard Wallace, is not pure escapism, for it has a moral: the true treasure is love and happiness, not monetary gain. I'm sorry that the film's makers found it necessary to include several scenes of torture because "Sinbad" comes close to being a perfect entertainment for the entire family.

"The Shocking Miss Pilgrim," also in technicolor, and with a story about the first typewriter in Boston (1874) aims to be something appropriate for the whole family too. Perhaps it is, but I found it so dull that I can hardly recommend it to anyone, even the kiddies. Betty Grable, as the typewriter in suitable period costumes that give her practically no opportunity to show her famous gams, and Dick Haymes, as her boss, who naturally thinks a woman's place is in the home, gayly sing some George Gershwin songs that are now being heard for the first time. Even with lyrics by Ira, George's brother, they enhance the Gershwin reputation very little. Anyone who still thinks the antics of suffragettes are very funny will no doubt enjoy this picture. For the benefit of socially conscious people who don't go to the film, I might add that management (Haymes) and labor (Grable) finally get together in and out of the office.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

The Forging of a Rebel. Arturo Barea. Reynal. $5.00.

ARTURO BAREA'S autobiography would really be a fine book were it cut in half; and yet, for my purposes of attempting to add to what knowledge I have of Spanish life prior to the Civil War, its length was not unuseful. Anyone at all interested in Spain will, I think, agree, but the general reader is almost certain to find the book's vast length tedious. And one must also add that it is uneven in effectiveness. Some of the passages constitute descriptive writing at its very best—a wonderful example is the picture he gives of an old-fashioned flour mill in a small Spanish town—but not always do the

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descriptions come off equally well, and unsuccessful attempts at descriptive writing make peculiarly discouraging reading.

What made it worthwhile for Barea to write an autobiography at all was the extraordinary variety of his life. His mother was desperately poor, a widow with three children, whom she supported as best she was able by working as a washerwoman in Madrid. But there were a well-to-do aunt and uncle and by no means all of the relatives were poverty-stricken. The aunt and the uncle helped out by taking care of young Arturo. And thus the boy was in contact in his earliest youth both with middle class and working class surroundings. His ambition was to become an engineer, but the death of the uncle made this impossible, and Barea took a job as a clerk in a bank—a job which he finally quit in disgust at the meanness of office politics surrounding him. He served a term in the engineer corps of the Spanish Army during the Moroccan campaigns of the 1920's. There he came in contact with the incredible systematized corruption of Spanish administrative life and had his fill of that. But his passionate interest in machinery and mechanics eventually brought him a good job as a patent attorney and enabled him to live comfortably until the outbreak of the Civil War. His personal experience of social injustice led him to take a certain interest in the labor movement—he was one of the early members of the office workers union—and he was vaguely socialist in his politics, though he took no active part in political affairs until the eve of the Civil War. When the uprising took place, Barea immediately took service with the Republicans; he became chief of press censorship for Madrid from the time the Republican Government moved to Valencia until approximately the moment of Negrin's coming to power. Then a combination of circumstances forced him out and led to his moving, first to Paris, then to England. It is obvious at a glance that a person whose career had been so diversified could cast considerable light upon Spain during the first third of this century, and I feel Mr. Barea has done precisely this.

Of course his book will be either ignored or spurned by partisans of Franco, for it is uncompromisingly against the present régime in Spain and everything that that régime represents, including the major portion of the Catholic clergy, and it may possibly be that Barea exaggerates a little here and distorts a little there. Only a person whose experiences had rather precisely duplicated his own could speak with authority in this connection. And yet there is a certain degree of conviction in his narrative which makes me inclined to believe that the picture comes as close to truth as any partisan picture can. It rings true. And it accords to a very large extent with what I have heard from many other sources.

The picture is a terrible one. Its recurrent theme is poverty—not only material poverty, but spiritual poverty even more. As you read you realize how very nearly impossible it was in Spain—and certainly this was true of countries other than Spain—for a man or woman of intelligence and conscience to live a life of which he need not be ashamed. On the material level, you had a country not naturally rich and with what wealth it had either deliberately left idle or exploited for the benefit of a very small class. Industriousness was no solution for a poor man. The opportunities to better yourself, if not completely lacking, were so scarce that good fortune alone could present them to you. On the spiritual level, great numbers of churchmen simply did not do their job. Of course this was not universally true, and Barea takes great pains to acknowledge his debt to two or three priests whom he greatly revered. But it is somewhat significant that these priests were men especially distinguished for their charity—indeed, they carried their charity to a point where one would have to call it latitudinarian. This in itself, it seems to me, is indicative of what was wrong in the Spanish Church. It had largely become in fact almost precisely what Maurras was condemned for advocating in theory—an institution for keeping the people quiet rather than for preaching the Gospel. Hence a highly spiritual man would be tempted to lean over backwards in the other direction and to condone what in a healthier society he would have no reason to condone. But even leaving the Church out of the question, there was a terrible poverty in Spain's spiritual life. Spanish politics were a mixture of corruption and fanaticism, with the purest group of all—the anarchists—monsters of bloody factionalism. You could not hope to make a living out of the honest practice of any of the arts. If you did manage to better yourself materially, you were practically forced into spiritual compromise.

And to render the situation even more impossible, Spain's social customs made married life either artificial or non-existent for the husband and wife, if not for the mother and children, as far as the city population was concerned. The rigid, almost Moorish, line drawn between men and women made any genuine companionship or even love between the sexes rare indeed. The result was that most Spaniards who could possibly afford to had mistresses, and those who couldn't afford, would frequent other women than their wives. Of course so sweeping a generalization always has its exceptions, especially in a country which has long produced ascetics, but quite clearly this was the general urban pattern, and what Mr. Barea has done particularly well is to indicate the disastrous psychological consequences of such a pattern.

"The Forging of a Rebel" is certainly not recommended as light reading, nor should it be read by anyone who is at all squeamish, but it does something to enlighten a non-Latin reader. HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

The Blue Flower: Best Stories of the Romanticists. Edited by Herman Kesten. Roy. $5.00.

THE ROMANTIC revival, which occurred in European literature during the last third of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, produced a ferment that the editor of these tales compares with the Renaissance, declaring it to be the second greatest artistic revolution in the Western World. "At the very moment when the world became bourgeois, society rationalized and civilization mechanized," he says, "when the big city grew dominant, life trivial, heaven godless, religion colorless and money all-powerful, at that moment the romantic poets appeared, to re-enchant the sobered world." Certainly it was fortunate that when life lost its fantasy, literature compensated: and lucky indeed is the writer or the artist who can always escape through, instead of away, whose way out is the way in! Here is a wonderfully satisfying collection of forty-five stories by authors from France, England, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Russia, Poland, Holland, Hungary, Denmark, Spain and America. It is like the fairy-tale

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book of one's youth, and this likeness is increased by the quite charming illustrations by Z. Czermanski. How the anthologist managed only to have nine acknowledgments to make is a feat of economical editing which it is to be hoped he will not keep too secret.

All the translations are adequate, and some are most lovely — Lafcadio Hearn's of Theophile Gautier's "Omphale," Virgilia Peterson's of "Vanina Vanini," by Stendhal, Augustine Birrell's of Victor Rugo's "Bold Pecopin," and Thomas Carlyle's version of Goethe's "New Melusine" stand out especially. Also it is good to have representative stories by authors who are all too often names in a literature course—Tieck, Kleist, von Arnim, Clemens Brentano, and Grillparzer for example, all of whom are here admirably served.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

The Saint and the Hunchback. Donald A. Stauffer. S. & S. $2.75.

MR. STAUFFER has written a novel about a young Irish monk named Odo, who sets out in a miraculously floating coffin to seek the fortune of his soul. He is handsome, vigorous, and proud, and convinced of his mission to be a saint. His companion, the hunchback Aelfric, is content only to be his shadow, but their wanderings and adventures thrust upon him the rôle which Odo covets and which he himself fears, that of genuine holiness. Odo learns slowly that there is a mysterious wisdom in Aelfric's quizzical speech and in his "crooked grin," and that holiness is often not a spectacular heroism but simply a complete willingness to endure a lifetime of small humiliations. In a neatly worked pattern of action, Aelfric, who did not seek love but simply loved, is given the high vocation of sacrifice; and Odo, who wanted to take love by storm, is left still in the bewilderment of his self-love.

Thus the story. It is surely not unsound, nor is it superficial; but its allegory seems to me to wear rather thin. Its main point is, after all, no revelation to any novice in the spiritual life, it has been made many times; and Mr. Stauffer does not develop it much beyond its usual formulation to any of its possible, rich paradoxes. When we reflect on the enigmatic depths to which writers like Dostoievsky, Bloy, Claudel, and Bernanos have carried their reflections on the nature of holiness, "The Saint and the Hunchback" seems simple fare indeed; the comparison may seem brutal, but those are the standards, there are no others.

Mr. Stauffer tells the story with a gentle humor which often has considerable charm; and his language, despite the persistent hint of artifice and studied archaicism, is always the work of genuine taste and sometimes achieves passages of real persuasion.

HENRY RAGO.

The Strange Alliance. John R. Deane. Viking. $3.75.

"THE LAST and highest triumph of history would . . . be the bringing of Russia into the Atlantic combine, and the just and fair allotment of the whole world among the regulated activities of the universe." So Henry Adams wrote in his "Education" of the events in 1903 leading up to the Russo-Japanese War, when he found that his country had begun for the first time "to think as a world-power." The passing of more than forty years, during which two world wars have been fought and the Soviet has emerged as a world power, has done little to change the problem, except possibly to make it more urgent and more difficult.

During that period certainly no time seemed more propitious for accomplishing that objective than the nazi-dictated occasion for a coalition war of Soviet Russia and the great Atlantic powers. The coalition was welded and it won the war, but, except for providing the nucleus of the United Nations (admittedly a large exception), it did not gain the larger purpose. The story of that failure is now set forth for the first time by one who was directly concerned in promoting our efforts at wartime cooperation with Russia.

Major General John R. Deane was in Russia from shortly before the Moscow Conference in 1943 until after the Japanese surrender in 1945. He was there as the head of the United States military mission and, working in conjunction with our Ambassador, W. A. Harriman, was charged with obtaining Soviet-American collaboration. He was present at all the Big Three conferences held in the old world during that period and, as one of the top military men, had an inside view of the negotiations leading up to the last great battles of the war and the final surrender.

General Deane's story of his experience is one of almost continual frustration. He arrived in Moscow "eager, hopeful, confident and happy . . . to make a frank and generous approach" to win full Soviet collaboration. He departed "with high skepticism about the possibility of future American collaboration with her [Russia's] leaders."

In this book he presents the reasons for his conclusion. They are given in the form of a running account, obviously as objective as he could make it, of his mission in Moscow. He had gone with express instructions from General Marshall "to avoid seeking information about the Russians." His story is likewise singularly free from any effort to provide information on the Russians and their system. It is rather, on the whole, a pragmatic account of the overtures he made and the reception they received from the Soviet leaders. As such it tells for the first time many things which have heretofore been "top secret" about the conduct of the war and the relation of the Allies. Things such as the establishment of shuttle-bombing bases, teletype communications, the exchange of weather information, the repatriation of war prisoners, the coordination of operations against Germany and preparations for joint operations against Japan. With very few exceptions, such as the "escape" of interned American aviators from the Far Eastern theater, Gen. Deane's story is one of resistance and broken agreements by the Soviet Government and efforts to cooperate by the American. The details he provides are sufficient to stock the "anti-Soviet" arsenal for some time to come.

However, General Deane is fully aware of and grateful for the Russian contribution to the Allied victory. Inferentially, he demolishes the ground from under those who tend to diminish the importance of keeping Russia in the war, including the war against Japan.

The final section of the book is devoted to the question, "Can we get along with Russia?" It bears only the slightest connection with the preceding and is admittedly the author's attempt to answer the questions that his story has raised. Distinguishing sharply between the Soviet leaders and the Russian people, he has no hope of friend-

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ship with the former. It is his conviction, however, that this does not preclude "getting along" with them provided that our policy is built on a tough *quid pro quo* basis. But such a policy must be positive and democratic, he asserts, warning against what he calls "competition in discourtesy." The only long-range hope that he has is in the Russian people, for whom, like so many others, he professes the deepest attachment.

The chief importance of the book also happens to be its main shortcoming, at least as a basis for American policy towards Russia and the world. General Deane, although now retired, quite frankly voices the view of the military. He has many side comments to make on the ability of Russia to wage a war outside of her own borders, and his chief view of American policy is that it must protect "American security." There is nothing especially to be criticized in such an attitude. After all such is the task of the military. But the military problem is, or should be, only one aspect of the over-all foreign policy. General Deane mentions only in passing the importance of the United Nations. Yet our main hope and the great problem confronting us in foreign policy certainly remains what Henry Adams saw it was more than a generation ago, although it is now rather in the United Nations than the "Atlantic combine" that the powers have to be brought together to regulate the affairs of the world.

OTTO BIRD.

The Metropolitan Life: A Study in Business Growth. Marquis James. Viking. $5.00.

IN A FOOTNOTE to the writing of this book Mr. James calmly explains that he and Metropolitan are not trying to put one over on anybody: that although he worked up this history at the request of Metropolitan, and for pay, he did it with the understanding that the company would not hinder his research or retouch his conclusions.

Mr. James apparently is not a man who automatically associates the control of more than a million dollars with interlocking directorates and cultural oppression, and he is able to assure his recent employers, at the end of three years of psycho-analysis, that there is no reason for them to have bad dreams. According to the standards of this world, he judges their stewardship (of what now amounts to nearly eight billion dollars and forty-five million policies) to have been remarkably prudent, reasonably compassionate, and always a shade more noble than the prevailing standard for financial morality. Most of the time Mr. James is able to come to these conclusions without any noticeable struggle, but once in a while —particularly when he is about the business of showing that the people who sometimes handled Metropolitan money were, if not canonical in their methods, at least more austere than their insurance friends—his summations are more humorous than I presume he intended them to be, and he is compelled to settle for some fairly commonplace evidence of virtue. In retelling the story of the Armstrong investigation of 1905, for instance, Mr. James concludes that, anyway, the investigation proved Metropolitan was spending less than any other insurance company in an effort to guide the thinking of members of the New York legislature, and when it was all over Metropolitan had the smallest number of officials censured or indicted.

Men were tinkering with the idea of insurance a long time before 1863, when a New York merchant named Simeon Draper received legislative consent to establish a modest corporation (seed-bed of the Metropolitan) called the National Union Life and Limb Insurance Company, an enterprise calculated to sustain personal enthusiasm for the Northern cause during the Civil War, and, on a lower plane, to take prompt and lucrative advantage of a war-boom hunger for insurance of any kind. In one way, Mr. Draper and his associates had something new to offer, for they solicited only military business. Insurance in most forms, however, had been a part of the American social kaleidoscope since 1812, and whether Mr. Draper knew it or not, the presumptions on which he risked a hundred thousand dollars in order to establish National Union Life and Limb were based on the accumulated insurance experience of the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, and Medieval Trade Guilds, as well as on the mathematical speculations of such people as Blaise Pascal and Edmund Hoyle.

The Civil War ended before National Union Life and Limb had a chance to amount to very much, and for several years afterward the company veered about under inconstant names and methods until, in 1869, it became the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company: home office, 243 Broadway. The reconstituted company was not immediately overcome with success, and during the early years the directors of Metropolitan were frequently called upon for real evidence of their devotion to the, at times, scarcely discernible social force. But by 1890, as the result of a cautious investment policy and a vigorous attention to insurance longings among the lower orders, the company was able to commission Napoleon Le Brun, a distinguished architect of those days, to draw up plans for an eleven-story building of white marble that was to fill out much of the east side of Madison Square.

Since the move into Madison Square, the progress of Metropolitan has been decorous but unrelenting, and while pressing quietly ahead in its chosen field, the company has been able to provide the nation with such side services as campaigns against tuberculosis, industrial accidents, and the house fly—this last a bitter, all-out fight which included, in addition to the dissemination of educational literature, the distribution, at company expense, of 5,500,000 fly-swatters. In 1914 the officers of Metropolitan gave everlasting proof of their belief in the spiritual content of their calling when, in a fit of altruism, they retired all capital stock and mutualized the company, a transaction which has provided Metropolitan with a homey atmosphere that must sometimes appear positively maudlin to the directors of old-fashioned capital stock corporations. Despite this pervading geniality, all Metropolitan policyholders may not realize that, as members of a mutual clan, they once owned more farmland than anyone else in the United States: that they loaned almost forty-five million dollars to Mr. Rockefeller for the construction of his Center; and that, as the aftermath of another robust loan, there was a moment in 1937 when they very nearly had the Empire State Building on their hands. Furthermore, it may please them to know that, in late years, their group has been a leader in the development of low-cost housing projects. As Mr. James points out, the ordinary Metropolitan policyholder, with an average insurance holding of something around a thousand dollars (and even some of the rest of us), is in this thing pretty deep.

JOHN BRODERICK.

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The Scot in History. Wallace Notestein. Yale Press. $4.00.

THE MANY people who know the breadth and precision of Professor Notestein's scholarship, his appreciation of the debt which history owes to literature, and his gift for good writing, need not be told that this volume deserves an honorable place on the book-shelves of the thoughtful and well informed. Though relieved by many a glint of humor, it is a sober and reasoned piece of *Kulturgeschichte,* surveying Scottish civilization from the time of the first use of gunpowder almost to that of the atomic bomb. But it is *Kulturgeschichte* with an object,—that of studying "the interplay of [national] character and history," as the sub-title puts it. Mr. Notestein's modest and charming preface shows that he was perfectly aware of the difficulty of the problem which he faced. That he has not approached an ultimate solution is another reminder that the story of mankind enfolds some secrets which may never be discovered by the most expert and diligent of scholars. Thus, Mr. Notestein is emphatic in declaring that the Protestant Revolt was *the* great determinant of Scottish national character in modern times; but he has apparently found no conclusive explanation of its suddenness and remarkable success. No more has he been able to demonstrate just why Calvinism in Scotland produced unique effects. A writer less truly an historian of high attainments and integrity might have offered some quite plausible answers, in a work of far less rich content.

Some readers, cherishing ideas about the numbers and influence of the "Catholic Highlanders," may be surprised to find that the Catholic Church almost vanishes from the book along with the wayward Queen Mary. But no ground for real objection exists here. Despite the heroic efforts of Catholic missionaries (which might, perhaps, have received some space), Catholicism was subsequently less effective as an element in national life north of the Tweed than south of it. The great revival of the nineteenth century, barely mentioned in this survey, owed almost everything to Irish immigrants.

Mr. Notestein "would like to hope that this book will lead to other and better ones about national character in history and about comparative history." It is just as well to be optimistic concerning the capacity of future historians, at any rate. H. C. F. BELL.

Night of Decision. A Novel of Colonial New York. Dorothy Fremont Grant. Longmans. $2.75.

EVEN if the average New Yorker is able to identify Dongan Hills as Staten Island, it is doubtful if he knows that Colonel Thomas Dongan was the best of New York's Colonial governors, the man who gave New York City her charter and coat of arms of beaver and windmills, who laid out Wall Street, conceived the idea of an intercolonial postal system, revived the Boston post, named twelve of our counties, founded Albany, convened the first Popular Assembly, and, most important of all, by making allies of the Indian Five Nations, preserved the eastern seaboard for the British.

It is Dongan as the Catholic upholder of religious and civil freedom on whom Mrs. Grant centers her interest. James II's revocation of New York's Bill of Rights and Leisler's Rebellion are also incorporated in the story. The story opens in Easthampton, Long Island, where the heroine falls in love with a likely young Englishman rescued from a shipwreck who turns out to be a Papist! Unable to forget him, however, she runs out of church on the day of her wedding to a stout Protestant and is waiting for the Catholic when he returns as Dongan's aide. The complications of a mixed marriage form the main current of their romance.

The primitive life of colonial Long Island is far more graphically pictured than Seventeenth Century New York, although it must have been an unusually picturesque town with its striking location and the comfortable heritage of Nieuw Amsterdam's commodious brick houses, handsome furnishings, trim formal gardens and lavish hospitality. Nor does Dongan ever really come to life, interesting as he is as a statesman whose Catholic sympathy for the Jesuit missionaries never disguised for him the dangers of French penetration. It is encouraging to have him remembered in so interesting a novel. E. V. R. WYATT.

Experience In Rebellion. Clifford Dowdey. Doubleday. $3.75.

IN A FULL PAGE review in the New York *Herald Tribune* weekly book review, "Experiment In Rebellion" was facetiously referred to as an unbiased history of the Civil War, written from the southern point of view. That reviewer, however, and this one agree that Mr. Dowdey has done much to correct the false impression resulting from "Northern" treatments of the war between North and South. The author emphasizes the emotionalism above and below the Mason-Dixon line in the period just before the Civil War and believes that this spirit brought on the war. With regard to John Brown, for instance, he writes bluntly: "A southern white did not have to be a slaveholder to resent an outsider, in the safety of New England, inciting black men to kill him. For all the marching songs about his moldering body, he was a paronoiac bent on murdering innocent people. Like so many, before and since, he was pretty all-inclusive about the Southerner's guilt." Since the author came from Richmond, the last sentence quoted was perhaps not simply a random expression of opinion.

Without defending the action of the southerners the author does make it clear that neither North nor South looked with disfavor on secession in the years preceding the war. The greatest authorities on the Constitution, such as Calhoun and Webster, had been unable to determine whether or not a state had the right to secede. The Civil War simply proved that the North was militarily stronger than the South, a fact realized by most sensible men in the South in 1861.

Although Richmond is the focal point of the account, the author includes even the efforts made in Europe by the South to become independent; he devotes much attention to Davis and Stephens, and doubts that either was the type of leader that the South needed; he writes revealingly of Lee, Jackson, Benjamin, and many others; he writes cuttingly of Sherman and his men. An excellent bibliography and a detailed index, added to 432 pages of impressive text, combine to make this book an unusually fine addition to Civil War literature.

PAUL KINIERY.

Specimens of English Dramatic Criticism. Oxford. $1.10.

A RECENT addition to Oxford's series of "World's Classics," this small book is a necessity to the professional and will be, I should think, an equal delight to the common reader. Covering the 17th to the 20th cen-

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turies, it is not until one reaches Archer on Shaw, and the subsequent varied Ibsen appraisals, that any closely reasoned *dramatic* criticism is essayed, so that it is the theatre which emerges in these pages, with particular emphasis on acting. And there's the point. For anyone who has ever tried to transcribe the effects, affects, all the real counterfeit of an actor, it is fascinating to have at least one country's historical surveys under one cover: for both reference and rue. I liked very much rediscovering (in a piece by Leigh Hunt) Johnson's august remark on Garrick's death —that it "eclipsed the gaiety of nations." And Thomas Barnes's description of Kean's daring *silence* in the tent scene in "Richard III" seemed a revelation, attached to all the roaring rumors published elsewhere concerning that strangled giant. There are also included Lamb, of course; Hazlitt; of course G. B. S.; Beerbohm's lovely piece on Dan Leno; Virginia Woolf on the Old Vic; and more. I missed anything of Dickens on Grimaldi, although that would perhaps stretch the limits of the plan a little, being neither strictly drama, nor especially criticism. A. C. Ward's Introduction is neat, and his willing exchange of Hazlitt's "pictorial— descriptive" method for that of Hunt, who . . . "by a subtle tuning of our sensibilities to his own, evokes in us that stirring of the pulse and stimulation of the mind which he had himself experienced" is surely just, and achieves definition as well. It only remains to be said that Oxford's version of the pocketbook is cheap, handsome, well-made, can be read without digging, and honestly fits.

KAPPO PHELAN.

Theology and Sanity. F. J. Sheed. Sheed. $3.00.

SOME YEARS ago A. S. Eddington, in his "Nature of the Physical World," provided an entry channel through which the layman might pass into the rarified atmosphere of physical science. Mr. Sheed, in "Theology and Sanity," undertakes to provide a similar transition into the abstrusities of Christian dogma. His effort is a notable success.

The author's initial distinction between facts that are unimaginable and facts that are inconceivable serves notice on the reader that here is an invitation to think. To Catholics who hold themselves well-instructed because they have exhausted the possibilities of the Baltimore Catechism, "Theology and Sanity" offers a healthfully humiliating experience. Mr. Sheed's thesis is that if we and our universe are part of a greater reality and a greater purpose, we cannot hope to live sanely without knowing our place in that reality and our part in that purpose. Sanctity by definition is love for God. Readily acknowledging that by God's grace, a high degree of sanctity is possible without deep understanding, the author reminds us that the normal genesis of love is through knowledge. Vividly and acutely, he presents the truths which provide the foundations for the superstructure of grace.

In investigating the world of ultimate reality no two people encounter the same difficulties. In his instruction of converts, the priest finds that what is self-evident to one will need detailed explanation and illustration to another. Perhaps that is the reason why the merit of Mr. Sheed's chapters exhibits a certain degree of inequality. It is evident that some topics have had more of the author's thought than others. The treatment of certain points suggests that they are included simply because they belong in a survey of theology; other subjects are dis-

CALL FOR FORTY THOUSAND

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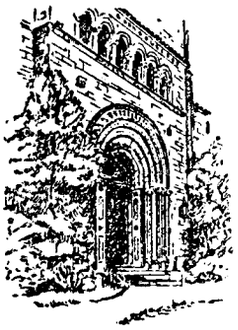

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cussed with a vitality best explained by the fact that they were important to Mr. Sheed personally.

The practical theologian might find fault with the chapters on the testing of angels and men. Mr. Sheed seems not to clarify sufficiently the idea of testing in this connotation. There was no testing in the sense that a mechanic tests a finished piece of work with a gauge; no test such as an engineer makes of the stress-strength of a cable. The happiness of Heaven by its nature is keyed only to love. To achieve that happiness, free creatures must be given the opportunity to grasp God by an act of love, which in practice means an act of obedience. It was wholly in this that the testing of angels and men consisted.

Again, in treating of grace, the identity of sanctifying grace with God the Holy Spirit seems insufficiently emphasized by Mr. Sheed. The indwelling of the Spirit of Love in the soul, which we technically term sanctifying grace, is a point that needs accenting. Too many persons look upon sanctifying grace as a negative entity, a mere absence of mortal sin.

There are other minor points with which issue might be taken. For example, the author considers the angels and blessed in Heaven to have achieved the highest freedom, whereas actually freedom ceases in Heaven. There the will is irrevocably fixed upon its proper object—God.

But these are minor, almost carping criticisms. In a field so vast as that explored by Mr. Sheed, a field where definitions are so precise and immutable, even a Thomas Aquinas may be found suspect. There are few priests, however learned, who would care to undertake the task of writing a digest of theology. When the design is not merely a synopsis, but a popularization, the writer must needs be a man of courage indeed. Mr. Sheed is such a man, and to his courage has been added an ability quite manifestly fortified by prayer. No intelligent man can read "Theology and Sanity" without being enlightened; few will read it without the quickening of spirit that is the inevitable consequence of a better understanding of God and oneself.

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